

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of this application is requested. Claims 1-4, 6-20, 23, 28, 31, 36, 38, 39, 44-49 and 51 are in the case.

I. THE INTERVIEW

At the outset, the undersigned wishes to thank the Examiner (Mr. Wang) for granting an interview in this case. The interview was held on December 1, 2009, and the courtesies extended by the Examiner were most appreciated. The substance of the interview will be clear from the Interview Summary and from the comments presented below. In particular, it was agreed that the Hoskin is not relevant to claim 47, and this is summarized on the Interview Summary.

II. THE OBVIOUSNESS REJECTIONS

Claims 1-4, 6-10, 15-27, 38, 39, 48 and 49 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Chirinos *et al.* (US 5,641,433) (Chirinos). Claims 11-14 and 44-46 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Chirinos. Claims 28, 31 and 47 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Chirinos in view of Hoskin *et al.* (US 4,896,723) (Hoskin). Claim 36 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Chirinos in view of Eagland *et al.* (US 2002/0128374 A1) (Eagland). The obviousness rejections are respectfully traversed.

Based on the outcome of the interview, and without conceding to the rejections, the independent claims have been amended to specify that the polyvinyl acetate is at

least 60% hydrolyzed to polyvinyl alcohol. In claims 1 and 51, the range of hydrolysis is 60-95%, (specification: page 13, lines 7 and 8, where the lower limit of 60% and the upper limit of 95% is disclosed), and in claims 44 and 48 the range of hydrolysis is 60-100% (specification: page 13, lines 7 and 8, where the lower limit of 60% is disclosed and the upper limit of 100% is disclosed). No new matter is entered.

It agreed informally during the interview that the cited art does not suggest hydrolysis of 60-95% or 60-100% of polyvinyl acetate to polyvinyl alcohol, in the method and fluid flow path as presently claimed. Withdrawal of the obviousness rejections is respectfully requested.

Favorable action is awaited.

Respectfully submitted,

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